Vagrants were everywhere in Victorian culture. They wandered through novels and newspapers, photographs, poems and periodicals, oil paintings and illustrations. They appeared in a variety of forms in a variety of places: ‘Gypsies’ and hawkers tramped the country, casual paupers and loafers lingered in the city, and vagabonds and beach-combers roved the colonial frontiers.

Uncovering the rich Victorian taxonomy of nineteenth-century vagrancy for the first time, this interdisciplinary study examines how assumptions about class, gender, race and environment shaped a series of distinct vagrant types. At the same time it broaches new ground by demonstrating that rural and urban conceptions of vagrancy were repurposed in colonial contexts. Representational strategies circulated globally as well as locally and were used to articulate shifting fantasies and anxieties about mobility, poverty and homelessness. These are traced through an extensive corpus of canonical, ephemeral and popular texts as well as a variety of visual forms.

**Alistair Robinson** is an honorary research fellow at Birkbeck, University of London.
Nineteenth-century literature and culture have proved a rich field for interdisciplinary studies. Since 1994, books in this series have tracked the intersections and tensions between Victorian literature and the visual arts, politics, gender and sexuality, race, social organisation, economic life, technical innovations, scientific thought – in short, culture in its broadest sense. Many of our books are now classics in a field which since the series’ inception has seen powerful engagements with Marxism, feminism, visual studies, post-colonialism, critical race studies, new historicism, new formalism, transnationalism, queer studies, human rights and liberalism, disability studies and global studies. Theoretical challenges and historiographical shifts continue to unsettle scholarship on the nineteenth century in productive ways. New work on the body and the senses, the environment and climate, race and the decolonisation of literary studies, biopolitics and materiality, the animal and the human, the local and the global, politics and form, queerness and gender identities, and intersectional theory is re-animating the field. This series aims to accommodate and promote the most interesting work being undertaken on the frontiers of nineteenth-century literary studies, connecting the field with the urgent critical questions that are being asked today. We seek to publish work from a diverse range of authors, and stand for anti-racism, anti-colonialism and against discrimination in all forms.

A complete list of titles published will be found at the end of the book.
VAGRANCY IN THE VICTORIAN AGE

Representing the Wandering Poor in Nineteenth-Century Literature and Culture

ALISTAIR ROBINSON

Birkbeck, University of London
For my parents,
Andrew and Alison
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Acknowledgements

This book started as a PhD thesis in the English Department of University College London, and benefitted enormously from the influence of the colleagues, mentors and friends I met there. First and foremost, I would like to thank my supervisors, Matthew Beaumont and Gregory Dart, for all their insight, encouragement and intellectual generosity. I would also like to thank Juliette Atkinson, Rachele De Felice, Alex Grafen, Asha Hornsby, Eric Langley, Eva-Charlotta Mebius, Adelais Mills, John Mullan, Luke Seaber, Alison Shell, Matthew Sperling and Christopher Webb, who read chapters of this book in various stages of its production.

Beyond the confines of UCL’s Malet Place, I would like to thank my PhD examiners, Josephine McDonagh and David McAllister; my MSc supervisor, Anna Vaninskaya; Peter Jones, who organised the ‘Out of Place: Vagrancy and Settlement’ conference in 2017; and Oskar Cox Jensen and David Hitchcock, whom I met there. David Hitchcock and Josephine McDonagh later acted as readers for this book and I owe a huge debt of gratitude to both of them: their comments were transformative.

I would also like to thank the Institute of English Studies, which supported this project after my PhD with a Postdoctoral Visiting Research Fellowship, and my colleagues at the New College of the Humanities where I was teaching during its culmination.

This book would not have been possible without the British Library, Cambridge University Library, the UCL Library and all their staff. Nor would it have been possible without Cambridge University Press, which has been wonderful to work with. In particular, I would like to thank the series editors and the commissioning editor, Bethany Thomas, for all their input. A version of Chapter 6 was first published as a journal article: ‘Beachcombers: Vagrancy, Empire, and Robert Louis Stevenson’s The Ebb-Tide’, Review of English Studies, 70.297 (2019), 930–49. I would like to thank the editor who oversaw its publication, Andrew Nash, and the anonymous readers who critiqued it.

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Acknowledgements

Nick and Iain Robinson, Lesley and David Jebson, and Alison and Andrew Robinson have provided emotional, material and intellectual support over many years. Louisa Ackermann, too, has been unfailingly generous and kind, supporting me throughout this book’s composition, and reading it through – twice. I am and will remain happily indebted to them all.